

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 AMMAN 03889 01 OF 02 121530Z
ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 SSM-01
/026 W

-----021835 121555Z /40

R 121432Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2314
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 3889

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, MASS, JO, US, PGOV, OREP (HAMILTON, LEE)
SUBJECT: CODEL HAMILTON MEETING WITH JAF CINC BIN SHAKER

1. SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH CODEL HAMILTON JULY 11
JAF CINC ZAYD BIN SHAKER STATED HIS BELIEF THAT
ISARELI MILITARY STRENGTH VIS-A-VIS ARABS HAS
INCREASED SINCE 1973 DUE TO SLOWNESS OF SOVIET
DELIVERIES TO SYRIA AND EGYPT COMBINED WITH CONTINUING
U.S. SUPPLY TO ISRAEL. BIN SHAKER EMPHASIZED LOW LEVEL
OF JORDANIAN-SYRIAN MILITARY COOPERATION WHICH HE
CHARACTERIZED AS SOME JOINT DEFENSE EXERCISES A YEAR AGO
IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS AGAINST POSSIBLE ISRAELI INVASION.
HE SAID LIMITATION IN AID TO JORDAN FROM
ARAB GOVERNMENTS HAS SLOWED DOWN 5-YEAR MILITARY
MODERNIZATION PLAN. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT JORDAN HAS
ASKED SAUDI ARABIA FOR AGREEMENT TO CONTINGENCY
MILITARY EQUIPMENT TRANSFERS IN EVENT OF A WAR BUT STATED
SAUDIS HAVE MADE NO REPLY AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT
PRIOR USG PERMISSION FOR SUCH A TRANSFER WOULD
BE REQUIRED. JORDAN HAS NO AGREEMENT WITH
EGYPT OR SYRIA TO FIGHT IN THE EVENT OF A
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 AMMAN 03889 01 OF 02 121530Z

WAR AND WOULD TRY TO STAY OUT, BUT
WOULD FIGHT IF ATTACKED. BIN SHAKER DISMAYED
BY APPARENT INTRANSIGENCE DISPLAYED IN INITIAL
STATEMENTS OF ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND
BY MILITARY BACKGROUNDS OF LIKUD GOVERNMENT
LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

2. CONGRESSMEN HAMILTON, OBEY, ROSENTHAL AND MIRVA MET WITH JORDAN ARMED FORCES CINC ZAYD BIN SHAKER JULY 11. REP HAMILTON OPENED DISCUSSION WITH REQUEST FOR BIN SHAKER'S OBSERVATIONS ON TWO AREAS OF INTEREST: STATE OF MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN JORDAN, OTHER ARAB CONFRONTATION STATES, AND ISRAEL, AND STATUS OF RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIA.

3. BIN SHAKER REPLIED THAT COMPARING MILITARY CAPABILITY OF JORDAN TO THAT OF ISRAEL VIS-A-VIS ARABS HAD IMPROVED SINCE 1973 WAR: SYRIANS AND EGYPTIANS WERE SHORT OF SPARE PARTS (WHICH SOVIETS HAD PROVEN SLOW TO REPLACE), WHILE U.S. WAS PROVIDING ISRAEL WITH VAST AMOUNTS OF EQUIPMENT. TURNING TO SUBJECT OF SYRIAN-JORDANIAN RELATIONSHIP, BIN SHAKER SAID THAT HE OFTENED ENCOUNTERED QUESTIONS ON THIS TOPIC FROM U.S. CONGRESSMEN; PERHAPS IT HAD BEEN PLAYED UP IN PRESS TOO MUCH. (ALSO, PRESIDENT ASAD IS MUCH MORE REASONABLE THAN HIS MEDIA CHARACTERIZATION.) IN FACT, HE SAID, COORDINATION AT MILITARY LEVEL HAD NOT OCCURRED ON SIGNIFICANT SCALE. NEITHER JORDAN NOR SYRIA IS COMMITTED TO COME TO THE OTHER'S AID IN CASE OF AN ISRAELI ATTACK ON ONE PARTY. (NOR, HE ADDED, DOES AGREEMENT EXIST WITH EGYPT.)
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 AMMAN 03889 01 OF 02 121530Z

JORDAN WOULD FIGHT, HOWEVER, IF ISRAELIS ATTACKED SYRIA THROUGH JORDANIAN TERRITORY. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT JORDAN IN EFFECT "HAD STAYED OUT OF WAR" IN 1973. BIN SHAKER SAID THAT AS CINC, HE ALWAYS HAD TO KEEP IN MIND POSSIBILITY THAT CIRCUMSTANCES IN SYRIA COULD QUICKLY CHANGE, (ASAD IS UNDER PRESSURE AT HOME) AND THAT JORDAN THEREFORE HAD TO MAINTAIN SOME POLITICAL DISTANCE. WHILE HE HAD NO DOUBTS ABOUT ABILITY OF CURRENT SYRIAN REGIME TO MAINTAIN ORDER, RECENT EVENTS THERE, SUCH AS BOMBINGS AND HIJACKINGS, WERE DISTURBING. HE WOULD HAVE MORE CONFIDENCE, HE SAID, IF THERE WERE FEWER TROUBLES IN SYRIA AT THIS TIME.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 AMMAN 03889 02 OF 02 121546Z
ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 SSM-01
/026 W

-----022033 121557Z /40

R 121432Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2315
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 3889

4. REP HAMILTON ASKED IF BIN SHAKER HAD INTERNAL SECURITY FUNCTION. BIN SHAKER REPLIED THAT HE DID "TO SOME DEGREE." HE ADDED THAT WHILE JORDAN HAS HAD ONLY ONE MAJOR TERRORIST INCIDENT IN LAST SEVERAL YEARS (NOVEMBER FEDAYEEN INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL ATTACK), ATTEMPTS BY FEDAYEEN TO INFILTRATE INTO JORDAN AND ON INTO WEST BANK CONSTITUTE CONTINUING IRRITANT. BIN SHAKER SAID THAT FEDAYEEN REPRESENT AS GREAT A THREAT TO JORDAN AS THEY DO TO ISRAEL. PROBLEM IS WELL IN HAND, HOWEVER, DUE TO GOOD INTELLIGENCE WORK AND COOPERATION FROM SYRIA.

5. REP HAMILTON ASKED BIN SHAKER TO COMMENT ON PLANS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF JAF. BIN SHAKER DISCUSSED JAF'S 5-YEAR MODERNIZATION PLAN, WHICH INVOLVES REDUCTION OF ARMY FROM FIVE TO FOUR DIVISIONS, LAST YEAR'S ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY CONSCRIPTION, AND AIM TO ADD SOME F-16'S IN 1980S. REP HAMILTON ASKED IF MODERNIZATION PLAN REQUIRED INCREASE IN CURRENT U.S. MILITARY AID LEVELS FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE. BIN SHAKER REPLIED THAT JORDAN ONLY CONCERNED WITH MAINTAINING MILITARY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 AMMAN 03889 02 OF 02 121546Z

AID AT CURRENT LEVELS. HE NOTED THAT JORDAN RECEIVES MONETARY ASSISTANCE FROM ARAB DONORS AS WELL AS FROM U.S., ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN SOME DELAYS IN RECEIPT OF ARAB AID. IN THIS CONTEXT, AMBASSADOR PICKERING DISCUSSED SAUDI-GUARANTEED FMS CREDIT PROGRAM FOR JORDAN, AND BIN SHAKER NOTED THAT JORDAN MAY BE APPROACHING OTHER OIL-RICH

ARABS FOR ADDITIONAL FMS CREDIT BACKING.

6. REP ROSENTHAL ASKED ABOUT DEGREE OF MILITARY COORDINATION BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND JORDAN. BIN SHAKER REPLIED THAT SAUDI BRIGADE WHICH HAD BEEN STATIONED NEAR KERAK HAD GONE HOME LAST YEAR. HE SAID THAT SQUADRON OF SAUDI AIR FORCE FIGHTERS HAD VISITED JORDAN TWO YEARS AGO, REMAINING IN JORDAN FOR 48 HOURS. IN REPLY TO QUESTION FROM REP ROSENTHAL, BIN SHAKER SAID SAUDIS ARE UPGRADING TOBUK AIR BASE, SOME 250 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF JORDAN-SAUDI BORDER (FROM WHICH, REP ROSENTHAL NOTED, SAUDIS CAN COVER JORDANIAN AND ISRAELI AIR SPACE). BIN SHAKER POINTED OUT THAT JORDAN IS ONLY ARAB CONFRONTATION STATE WHOSE ARMED FORCES, LIKE SAUDI ARABIA'S, USE AMERICAN EQUIPMENT. JORDAN HAS REQUESTED, AND WOULD WELCOME, TRANSFER TO JORDAN OF SAUDI EQUIPMENT IN CASE OF ATTACK ON JORDAN BUT SAUDI ARABIA HAS NOT REPLIED TO REQUEST. AMBASSADOR PICKERING POINTED OUT AND BIN SHAKER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT JORDAN IS WELL AWARE THAT SUCH A TRANSFER WOULD REQUIRE U.S. PERMISSION. JORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA, BIN SHAKER ADDED, HAVE NO COMMITMENT TO AID EACH OTHER IN CASE OF ATTACK. BIN SHAKER ALSO NOTED THAT JORDAN'S SMALL AIR FORCE WAS NO MATCH FOR ISRAEL'S.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 AMMAN 03889 02 OF 02 121546Z

7. RESPONDING TO CODEL'S IMPRESSIONS OF NEW ISRAELI LEADERSHIP, BIN SHAKER REFERRED TO IMPRESSION OF INTRANSIGENCE CREATED BY BAGIN STATEMENTS MADE UPON SOON AFTER ELECTION VICTORY. BIN SHAKER HAD ALSO BEEN DISMAYED BY COMPOSITION OF BEGIN'S CABINET. BIN SHAKER WAS PLEASED, HOWEVER, THAT PROVOCATIVE STATEMENTS HAD BEEN MUTED IN RECENT WEEKS. HE SAID THAT RESPONSIBLE ARAB LEADERS HAD NOT MADE GRATUITOUS REMARKS ENDANGERING PEACE PROCESS IN OVER A YEAR. REP ROSENTHAL SECONDED BIN SHAKER'S CALL FOR MORATORIUM ON PUBLIC COMMENTS, BUT HE TOOK EXCEPTION TO BIN SHAKER'S CLAIM THAT ARABS HAD NOT MADE UNDELPFUL COMMENTS, CITING RECENT REMARKS BY PRES SADAT. BIN SHAKER REPLIED THAT ISRAELIS CONTINUED TO CALL FOR CONCESSIONS, WHILE AT SAME TIME CONTINUING TO OCCUPY ARAB LAND; ARABS HAD ALREADY GIVEN AMPLE CONCESSIONS. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT ARABS THEMSELVES ARE PREPARED TO MAKE DRASTIC ADJUSTMENTS IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE REAL PEACE.

8. THIS MESSAGE NOT CLEARED WITH CODEL.
PICKERING

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CODELS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MILITARY CAPABILITIES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977AMMAN03889
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770247-0726
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770769/aaaachpc.tel
Line Count: 226
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b5b8676d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1895706
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL HAMILTON MEETING WITH JAF CINC BIN SHAKER
TAGS: MARR, MASS, PGOV, OREP, JO, US, SY, (HAMILTON, LEE), (BIN SHAKER, ZAYD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b5b8676d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009